State Coastal Conservancy Strategic Plan 2013-2018

December 6, 2012

I. Introduction

Welcome to the State Coastal Conservancy's Strategic Plan for 2013 through 2018. The Plan addresses how we work, describes our past accomplishments, and presents our view of the future of the California coast over the next five years—including the steps needed to respond to climate change. The Plan also provides a policy reference, an overview of our priorities, a delineation of coastal issues by region, and a summary of our financial status and needs.

California is blessed with one of the most beautiful coastlines in the world. The coast is an environmental, recreational and economic asset for our state, attracting tourists and enriching our quality of life. Two out of every three Californians lives in a coastal county and millions of visitors come to our coast each year. The coast is also a major economic driver in the state: the National Ocean Economics Program found that in 2000 the total gross state product of California's coast and ocean was approximately $42.9 billion and it supported almost 700,000 jobs. California beaches are one of the state's most prized recreational amenities. Wetlands, sand dunes, lagoons and other coastal natural resources provide important habitat for rare species, nurseries for our commercial fisheries, and flood protection for our communities. Coastal watersheds provide clean water, support important forest lands and are critical habitat for salmon and other fish.

The people of California have long recognized the value of our coast and have consistently supported stewardship of its resources. In the 1960s, environmental activists prompted legislation to protect the shoreline of San Francisco Bay, and in the 1970s, California voters enacted Proposition 20, a grass-roots initiative to preserve the natural beauty of the outer coast. Together these laws established that the coast and bay shoreline are important natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of all of the people of California. Proposition 20 states:

> *it is the policy of the State to preserve, protect, and where possible, to restore the resources of the coastal zone for the enjoyment of the current and succeeding generations*

California manages its coastal resources with two strong regulatory agencies that limit harmful impacts to coastal resources: the California Coastal Commission (Commission), which regulates development along the state's coastline; and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), which regulates development of the San Francisco Bay shoreline.

One of the strengths of California's strategy for coastal protection is that it does not rely on regulation alone. The Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy) was created in 1976 to complement the regulatory agencies by working to permanently protect coastal resources and improve public access. Appendix A lists the Conservancy's statutory authorities. The Conservancy works in partnership with others to implement projects that protect coastal resources; expand public access to the coast; and enhance its natural resources. The Coastal Conservancy has played a critical role in shaping the coastal landscape that we see today. Since its creation, the Conservancy has completed more than 1,500 projects, building hundreds of

miles of trails, constructing scores of public access facilities, and preserving hundreds of thousands of acres of wildlife habitat, coastal farmland, and scenic open space. Many of the most-loved scenic, natural, and recreational resources of the California coast and the San Francisco Bay Area have been protected by the work of the Conservancy and its many partners.

Coastal Conservancy's Mission

The Coastal Conservancy acts with others to preserve, protect, and restore the resources of the California coast, ocean, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Our vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coastline, ocean and San Francisco Bay Area.

How We Work

The Conservancy is a problem-solving agency, emphasizing accomplishment rather than focusing on policies or processes. In order to complete successful projects, the Conservancy has led many regional and local planning efforts to engage local communities and other stakeholders in finding solutions to multi-faceted coastal resource challenges.

- The Conservancy works on behalf of the citizens of California, developing innovative projects to enhance coastal resources for the benefit of all.
- The Conservancy works on a range of geographic scales to plan and implement projects that achieve multiple objectives, such as restoration of habitats, completion of trails and recreational amenities, and economic enhancement of urban waterfronts.
- The Conservancy employs the best available science for each project, subjecting its projects to independent scientific review when appropriate. The Conservancy employs innovative techniques in resolving land use conflicts, developing plans, and implementing projects.
- The Conservancy staff adds value by its combination of technical knowledge, commitment to community involvement, skill at communicating the needs of the coast and San Francisco Bay region to decision makers, and experience in helping to address coastal issues.
- The Conservancy works through transparent, public processes and Conservancy projects are discussed and acted upon by the board with a full opportunity for public involvement.
- The Conservancy strives to be as efficient as possible by limiting the level of bureaucratic process to what is essential to ensure adequate public involvement and to meet legal requirements.

In preparing this plan and to help identify what our future operating priorities should be, the Conservancy met with more than 130 stakeholders and partners to hear their ideas about our organization's strengths and weaknesses. We asked our partners to describe the Conservancy in a single word. Here is a word cloud showing their responses (size reflects frequency of response).

During the stakeholder interviews, comments about the Conservancy were overwhelmingly positive; the Conservancy is viewed as a highly collaborative, responsive, efficient, innovative, and problem-solving agency. Many people commented that the Conservancy's staff is highly valued by local partners for their competence, expertise and credibility. In addition, local partners appreciate the flexibility and interactive nature of our grant process and find it is more effective than annual grant rounds used by most state and federal agencies because our process allows the grantees to work with the Conservancy to develop the best possible projects.

Accomplishments

Over the past decade, the voters of California have entrusted the Conservancy with nearly $1 billion in bond funds to protect coastal resources and improve public access to the coast. These funds have allowed the Conservancy and its partners to implement very significant projects, protecting more than 189,000 acres, building more than 240 miles of trails; and enhancing more than 18,400 acres of coastal habitat. Many projects that had been planned for decades were able to be implemented as a result of this enormous public investment. Numeric tables showing the Coastal Conservancy's accomplishments under the last strategic plan are provided in Appendix B.

Listed below are a few examples of the projects that the Coastal Conservancy has helped implement.

Building Regional Trails

California Coastal Trail: The Coastal Trail will be a continuous trail along the coast from the Oregon border to the Mexican Border. During the last five years, the Conservancy helped construct 125 miles of new trail all along the coast including new segments in almost every coastal county.

San Francisco Bay Trail: The San Francisco Bay Trail is a planned 500-mile walking and biking trail around the bay and across its major bridges. The Conservancy has helped complete over 325 miles, providing accessible recreation and promoting alternative transportation.

Bay Area Ridge Trail: A planned 550-mile long-distance hiking, biking, and horseback-riding trail along the ridgeline above San Francisco Bay. The Conservancy has helped build nearly 100 miles of new trail.

Santa Ana River Trail: A river parkway that will connect the Inland Empire from the crest of the San Bernardino Mountains to the Pacific Ocean near Huntington Beach. The Conservancy is helping build new trail and filling critical gaps to complete the 100 mile parkway, providing a continuous multi-use trail that connects three counties and 17 cities.

Restoring Coastal Wetlands and Watersheds

Salt River Restoration: A multi-objective fish and wildlife habitat restoration project that will restore 300 acres of tidal marsh and 7 miles of riparian habitat, enhance agricultural lands, and help to resolve longstanding flooding issues in a portion of the Eel River Delta in Humboldt County.

Hamilton Wetlands: A nationally-significant restoration project that involves the use of clean dredged sediment from the Port of Oakland and other ports to convert a former military airfield into a mosaic of wetland habitats.

South Bay Salt Pond Restoration: The largest wetland restoration project on the West Coast. Nearly 15,000 acres of former commercial salt ponds are being restored or enhanced as wetlands habitat, flood protection is being improved for Silicon Valley and other communities in the South and East Bay, and Bay Trail segments and other recreational amenities are being created.

Carmel River Restoration: A comprehensive effort to revitalize the Carmel River by reconnecting the river to its floodplain, restoring riparian habitat, removing San Clemente Dam

and the Old Carmel River Dam in the upper watershed, and developing a river parkway trail that will eventually connect the headwaters of the river in Los Padres National Forest to the Carmel Beach.

Protecting Important Coastal Resource Lands

Point Arena Ranch: The Conservancy's ability to move quickly enabled the protection of a 123 acre headland in Point Arena, Mendocino County, and secured the option to purchase an adjacent 532-acre coastal property, which will be acquired with federal funds. The property has been identified by the Bureau of Land Management as an area of critical environmental concern and provides habitat for two endangered species. Together, the two properties are now part of a 7.5 miles stretch of contiguous protected coastline.

Jenner Headlands: The 5,630 acre Jenner Headlands property on the Sonoma Coast was protected in perpetuity. This stunning coastal property situated north of the mouth of the Russian River includes coastal prairie, redwood forest and riparian habitats. Planning is underway for the development of a 2.5 mile segment of coastal trail on the property.

Preparing for Climate Change

Surfers Point: A model managed retreat project at a very popular surfing beach and recreational destination in the City of San Buenaventura that demonstrates a comprehensive response to severe beach erosion in the face of sea level rise. The project restores and enhances the ecological structure and function of the shoreline as well as the visitor's experience by widening the sandy beach, restoring sand dune habitat, improving water quality, and relocating and improving public access and recreation facilities.

San Francisco Bay Living Shorelines: This is a pilot project to restore critical eelgrass and native oyster habitat in San Francisco Bay. The project is studying both the ecological and physical benefits of these habitats, including potential to reduce wave energy and protect inland areas from sea-level rise and storm surge**.**

Leading Multi-Agency Partnerships

Integrated Watershed Restoration Program: A unique and highly successful multiagency program that assists in identifying, designing, permitting, and implementing watershed restoration projects in San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties.

Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project: An ongoing broad-based partnership to improve coordination, pool resources, and advance the recovery of wetlands in coastal southern California. Primarily staffed by the SCC, the Wetlands Recovery Project is celebrating its 15-year anniversary.

II. Context for this plan

Purpose of this plan

Despite our significant accomplishments, the resources of the coast and San Francisco Bay Area continue to face enormous threats and challenges. As California grapples with impacts of climate change, continued development pressure, and new industrial uses along the coast, it will continue to need its multi-faceted coastal management program. In addition, the Conservancy's work will be critical if we want to create a future along the coast that supports smart growth, regional trails, accessible parks and open space, and resilient natural habitat areas. Based on our analysis of the issues facing the coast and Bay Area, this plan identifies specific goals and numeric objectives for the Conservancy to achieve over the next five years. The purpose of the goals and objectives is to help the Conservancy prioritize its work, allocating both its staff resources and funding to projects that achieve these objectives.

This plan is intended to serve several audiences. It is a policy reference for the Conservancy Board and its staff, providing an overall vision and identifying specific metrics to measure the effectiveness of our work. The plan provides members of the legislature with an overview of the Conservancy's priorities in the context of California's coastal management program. It is also a reference for the California Natural Resources Agency to assist in the coordination of the Conservancy's work with other agencies and departments working to conserve California's natural heritage. The plan is intended to provide control agencies such as the Department of Finance, Legislative Analyst and State Auditor with an explanation of the Conservancy's priorities and context for our projected staff and funding needs. Finally, and equally important, the plan is intended to communicate to our partners – local governments, state and federal agencies, private landowners, nonprofit conservation organizations, and private conservation funders– and to the general public the future role of the Conservancy in protecting coastal resources.

In drafting this plan the Conservancy has sought extensive input from our partners and the public. Staff has interviewed more than 130 partner organizations and stakeholders to provide input into the plan. An initial draft plan was posted on the Conservancy website in October and public comments were accepted for a 30 day period. The final plan incorporated changes based on Conservancy member review and the public comments. The final plan was discussed and adopted by the Conservancy at its December 6, 2012 meeting.

Statewide Context

This is a time of dramatic change for the Conservancy. Looking ahead, different areas of our coast will face different challenges, but two issues will frame all of the future work of the Conservancy: funding and climate change.

<u>Funding</u>

The Conservancy experienced a huge influx of project funding during the last decade. In its first 20 years, the Conservancy authorized approximately $200 million for restoration, acquisition, and access projects. In the decade that followed, the Conservancy authorized

projects using nearly $1 billion in bond funds provided by California's voters through Propositions 12, 13, 40, 50 and 84. A report on the status of the Conservancy's funding for projects by fund source is provided in Appendix C. In its previous strategic plan, the Conservancy anticipated expenditure of $600 - 650 million on projects. During the next five years, we expect that the Conservancy's funding situation will be very different.

Funding is declining for both Conservancy projects and operations and future funding will have to come from new sources. During this transition, we will need to regularly reassess our remaining funding and adjust spending rates, organizational structure, and our work priorities. Staff is actively pursuing new sources of support to sustain our work along the coast.

Project Funding

About $160 million for projects remains from the Conservancy's previous bond allocations. In addition, we anticipate that the Conservancy will have about $5 million per year of non-bond funds, including Habitat Conservation Funds, Violation Remediation Account and Coastal Access funds. Unless the voters pass a new bond act that provides new funding for the Coastal Conservancy, project funds will become increasingly scarce. As a result, the Conservancy will focus on completing projects that we have worked on for years. It is unlikely that we will initiate any new, large scale, long-term projects. As an example, absent new bond funds, it is unlikely that the Conservancy will enter into any more cost-sharing agreements with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for new ecosystem restoration projects.

The 2002 and 2007 Strategic Plans focused on projects that we expected to fund. This new plan assumes a broader role than grant-making for the Conservancy to achieve its mission. In meeting with stakeholders to develop this plan, we asked how the Conservancy could best work with them to conserve and enhance their coastal resources in an era of limited funding. Based on these interviews, we have identified many ways that the Conservancy can help preserve the resources of the coast and improve public access beyond granting fund for projects, including:

- Facilitating and coordinating regional collaborations to develop plans, address emerging issues, and identify and implement recommended plan priorities.
- Identifying alternative sources of funding and securing grant funds to support our projects.
- Providing leadership on innovative pilot projects, including climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Resolving potential permit roadblocks and coordinating agencies (such as facilitating joint agency review of projects) to support implementation of regionally important projects.

The Conservancy must continue to innovate, including creating new partnerships to leverage our resources and to broaden support for our programs. We envision working with public health advocates, the tourism industry and smart growth initiatives to best use our resources and find new support for our projects.

Operational Funding

There is no dedicated source of funding to pay for the operations of the Conservancy; it does not currently receive any money from the state General Fund for its support budget. The Coastal Conservancy has relied on a small percentage of the bond funds it administers to pay for much of the organization's operational costs during the past decade, but these funds are running out. Given the recurring deficit in the state budget, this plan assumes that the Conservancy will be responsible for generating much of the funds needed to support the organization. There are potential funding sources for the Conservancy's projects and programs that we are actively exploring. These sources include: carbon revenue, mitigation or in-lieu fee programs, environmental license plate funds, grants for staff, and fee-for-service arrangements. The plan supports transformation to an organization in which our staff provides a wider range of services than the predominant grant administration role appropriate when more bond funds were available. This revised strategy will inevitably prioritize staff resources toward activities that generate funding; sometimes altering what might otherwise be our highest priorities. A ten year plan for funding the operation of the Conservancy is provided as Appendix D.

Climate Change

Rapid climate change will affect human welfare and threaten critical infrastructure. Nearly every type of project that the Conservancy supports will be affected by a changing climate. Public recreational facilities, including some public trails, parklands and piers, will eventually be at risk from flooding and erosion. Similarly, urban waterfronts and critical infrastructure will be at risk, especially from extreme events. Lands that provide open space, support agriculture, and lands that provide habitat for an abundance of species will be affected by warming temperatures and altered precipitation.

The Conservancy's adopted *Climate Change Policy and Project Selection Criteria (*originally adopted in 2009, updated in November 2011) changed how we conceive, design, and implement projects that are affected by climate change. Restoration of natural resources in an era of climate change means reestablishing natural processes rather than trying to return to conditions at an historic point in time. Assessing which new lands should be prioritized for protection requires assessing the current and future conservation values under a changing climate. The cost of a public recreational trail or infrastructure projects located in a hazard zone must be weighed against the benefit to be derived for the expected duration of the project.

The Conservancy's legal authority to undertake projects and award grants for projects to address potential and existing climate change impacts was clarified in law through SB 1066 which will take effect in 2013. In addition, the Conservancy may now undertake and provide funding for projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As with many of our efforts, working on climate change will require that the Conservancy engage in constructive partnerships with many other local, state and federal agencies.

Impacts from Sea Level Rise

The impacts of more frequent and intense storms paired with rising sea level is increasing flooding, storm surge inundation, coastal erosion and shoreline retreat, and wetland loss, dramatically reshaping the coastline of California. The National Research Council's 2012 report *Sea-Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington* stated that sea-level rise will not be uniform along the coast of California due to regional factors, including ocean and atmospheric circulation patterns and tectonics along the coast. Generally, Cape Mendocino marks the point of transition where land is subsiding to the south and uplifting to the north, with respective relative sea levels rising and falling. As the mean sea level rises, extreme high-sea-level events are expected to be more common and longer in duration.

Sea-level rise will put human populations, critical infrastructure and natural resources at risk. The Conservancy will need to consider and address these risks in projects located near the coast and will implement projects to help communities plan for these changes. Low-lying coastal areas, such as sand dunes and beaches, are particularly vulnerable to rising seas and increasing waves. Where wetlands and dunes are prevented from migrating inland by coastal armor or structures, they will eventually be washed away. Marshes and mudflats can buffer inland areas from flooding, but will need an adequate supply of sediment to persist late into this century.

Impacts from Rising Temperatures and Changing Precipitation

Rising temperatures are affecting terrestrial habitats by altering the seasonal timing of flowering, leaf and insect emergence, bird migration, and wildlife migration. Alteration of these and other natural processes affects aquatic and terrestrial species and the human benefits derived from them. Habitats and ecosystems that we depend on to sustain wildlife, provide drinking water and support agricultural production will be impacted by the more variable and extreme weather conditions predicted for California.

Scientists evaluating the implications of future climate projections for biological conservation are identifying where climate change is likely to shift, shrink, expand and alter existing habitats. Areas with many different micro-climates are expected to continue to provide the greatest diversity of species. Large reserves, including protected open spaces, working lands and habitat corridors, are expected to provide the best opportunity for species to adapt to a changing climate. Management plans that focus on ecosystem processes and functions rather than particular species will be most effective in supporting biodiversity. Invasive species threaten to colonize areas in transition and will need to be addressed in management plans to make way for the migration of native plants and animals.

Human health along the coast, particularly in urban areas, will be affected by more frequent extremely hot conditions. The greater heat absorption and retention in urban areas creates "heat islands" which can have mean temperatures of up to 5 degrees warmer than their surroundings. These higher temperatures have killed people, increased peak energy use, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and caused other adverse impacts. Planting of trees and vegetation can lead to significantly lower surface and air temperatures by providing shade and through evapotranspiration. The Conservancy can help address the heat island effect through

tree planting and other means, thereby improving the quality of life for humans, while providing multiple benefits to the environment.

Addressing Climate Change

Many of the Conservancy's projects result in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Natural lands capture carbon, the major component of greenhouse gases, and restored wetlands increase carbon sequestration. Trails and recreational amenities built near population centers can result in a reduction of vehicle miles traveled.

Effective January 2013, the Conservancy's enabling legislation provides express authority for the agency to undertake projects and award grants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, address extreme weather events, sea level rise, storm surge, beach and bluff erosion, salt water intrusion, flooding, and other coastal hazards that threaten coastal communities, infrastructure, and natural resources. The Conservancy is directed to maximize public benefits, including, but not limited to, reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, reducing hazards to harbors and ports, preserving and enhancing coastal wetlands and natural lands, conserving biodiversity, and providing recreational opportunities.

The legislature expressed its intent that the Conservancy have adequate authority to work with local governments and private entities to address the effects of climate change on coastal resources, public and private, natural and built, including, but not limited to, coastal beaches, ports, urban waterfronts, infrastructure, the ocean, riparian areas and watersheds, fisheries, forests, wetlands, and public and private real property; and declared that the Conservancy's participation can contribute to the resiliency of the natural and built environments and facilitate migration of plant and animal species as they move to adapt.

Regional Context

The California coast comprises a diverse landscape, including big cities, small towns, wilderness areas, forests, wetlands, grazing land and agricultural fields. Reflecting the diversity of the coast, the Conservancy's program is organized into four geographic regions: the North Coast, the Central Coast, the South Coast and the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Each region has different challenges and opportunities specific to its resources and the needs of its communities. Below are brief summaries of these regions, the major coastal conservation issues they face, and the Conservancy's anticipated priorities for each region.

North Coast

The Conservancy's north coast region extends from windswept beaches in Del Norte County at the Oregon border, south some 370 miles to the spectacular Marin headlands overlooking San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge. The rainy climate in the north supports Douglas fir and coast redwood forests, where the tallest and most impressive trees in the world loom overhead. Flowing through these forests are California's largest coastal river (the Klamath), California's third largest river system (the Eel), and the longest undammed river (the Smith). Historically, the Klamath and Eel together produced much of the Pacific Coast's salmon and steelhead resources, and they are still important biological engines for salmon

recovery. Endangered species found in the area include the northern spotted owl, coho salmon, and marbled murrelet. Farther south, the climate is drier and the vegetation transitions to California oak woodland in the coast ranges and coastal prairie along the craggy coast. The entire coastline is dotted with estuaries, lagoons and sheltered harbors that provide unique and critical habitats for fish, birds and other wildlife. Many estuaries and river mouths are flanked by expansive dune systems with their own unique flora and fauna.

The five-county north coast region – including the coastal draining watersheds of Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Sonoma and Marin Counties – is one of the least populated coastal regions in California, with just under one million residents. American Indian tribes have made their home within this region for thousands of years and maintain a strong presence. Small cities straddle the two transportation corridors (Highway 1 along the coast and Highway 101 inland) and include Crescent City, Eureka, Ukiah, Fort Bragg, and Santa Rosa. Family farms, dairies, vineyards and rolling grasslands with grazing sheep and cattle characterize this area.

Stunning natural beauty and abundant recreational opportunities make the north coast region a prime destination for visitors from around the world. In 2010, over two million people visited Point Reyes National Seashore; and every year, 2.9 million visit the nineteen mile stretch of coastline at Sonoma Coast State Beach. Outdoor activities, such as paddling, hiking, whale watching and birding are steadily increasing. Highlights in the region include attending Del Norte County's annual California Redwoods Bird and Nature Festival or Humboldt County's Godwit Days, touring the Point Cabrillo Lighthouse in Mendocino County, or kayaking the quiet waters of Big River or Tomales Bay.

Major Issues in the North Coast

Dramatic social and economic changes are occurring in this region. There are four key harbors on the north coast (Crescent City, Humboldt Bay, Noyo Harbor, and Bodega Bay) and commercial fishing activity annually generates tens of millions of dollars for the region. However, many fisheries are declining and so is the number of commercial fishing vessels. Severe fluctuations in salmon fishery stocks have resulted in periodic cancellation of commercial and recreational fishing seasons for Chinook salmon. Experts are uncertain about what has caused the collapse, pointing to dozens of factors including unusual weather patterns, silt from logging, poor habitat and water quality, legal and illegal water diversions in coastal watersheds, unfavorable ocean conditions and water diversions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Changes are also occurring in the timber industry. Approximately half of the region's seven million acres are private forestland. The history of industrial timber management has created a pattern of very large industrial ownerships, each with many hundreds of underlying parcels. In 1994, the last of 43 large and historic lumber mills in Del Norte County closed. Several mills in other counties have also shut down. Changes in the forest economy are causing some landowners to seek other, higher returns from their investment, including selling parcels for rural development, which diminishes the timber base and the ecosystem services these lands provide. Meanwhile, a variety of factors such as reclamation of tidal marsh, the legacy of industrial logging in north coast watersheds, water diversions, riparian habitat clearing, and other factors has affected and continues to affect aquatic and terrestrial resources, especially

downstream fisheries. In the southern portion of the region there are continued pressures to convert forests, grasslands and farmlands to rural residential and agricultural uses, especially vineyards. Sonoma and Mendocino Counties are dominant wine producing regions, and vineyard development has expanded west toward the coast and onto steep slopes. These water-intensive uses in water scarce areas can have serious and cumulative effects on water supply and quality and the rich biodiversity of the north coast region.

North Coast - Major Efforts in the Next 5 Years:

- Protect working landscapes throughout the region;
- Develop projects that sequester carbon, allowing California's natural resources to benefit from California's carbon market;
- Continue construction of the coastal trail and harbor revitalization in Crescent City;
- Focus fishery restoration efforts on the restoration of basic river processes such as barrier removal, floodplain connectivity and function, water supply, and water quality;
- Support efforts to develop low-cost visitor accommodations such as the Redwood Hostel;
- Continue implementation of the Humboldt County Coastal Trail Plan and the Humboldt Bay Water Trail;
- Implement the Arcata/Eureka Rail with Trail Project;
- Continue efforts to protect strategic properties in the 10 Mile River Estuary;
- Continue implementation of the Mendocino Coastal Trail Plan and secure new coastal trail rights of way;
- Continue to implement priority projects identified in the Mendocino Coastal Conservation Plan;
- Complete construction of the Fort Bragg Mill Site public access improvements;
- Assist local communities to assess risks from climate change and develop adaptation plans to address those risks;
- Secure new coastal trail rights of way in northern Sonoma County;
- Support efforts to improve public access to protected lands in Sonoma County;
- Protect sensitive habitat lands around Tomales Bay;
- Implement public access projects that connect existing trail segments.

San Francisco Bay Area

Along with being home to over seven million people and an economic engine for the State, the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area hosts a diversity of wildlife and habitats, world-class recreational opportunities, and working farms and ranches. These are the resources that the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program works to protect and improve, in order to support the region's economy and quality of life through protection of our natural infrastructure.

The region is defined by the San Francisco Bay, a 1,600 square mile estuary that drains 40% of California's land and connects to the Pacific Ocean at the Golden Gate. The estuary's edges are a mix of developed areas, including urban waterfronts, ports, and marinas, and

wetlands used by endangered species, migratory birds, and fish and other aquatic species. The rivers that flow from the Sierra into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta are the Estuary's primary source of freshwater; in addition, numerous creeks and rivers flow directly into San Francisco Bay and are important for steelhead trout and other wildlife.

Surrounding the Bay are mountains and ridges that separate the Bay from the central valley and the coast and form part of the Pacific Coast Range. These mountains include well-known peaks of the Bay Area: Mount Tamalpais, Mount Diablo, and Mount Hamilton. The mountain ranges and valleys of the Bay Area are home to numerous wildlife habitats, including redwood forests, oak woodlands, serpentine grasslands, sycamore groves, willow groves, and seasonal wetlands. These mountains and valleys also contain rich grazing and farming land, which cover 40% of Bay Area lands and contribute to the Bay Area's economy and to a healthy, local food supply.

Major Issues in the Bay Area

The Greenbelt

The Bay Area is famous for its greenbelt of open space, which provides clean air, clean water, local food, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat. Over a quarter of the Bay Area's 4.3 million acres are protected, but additional conservation work is needed to sustain the region's unique biodiversity, particularly in the face of climate change impacts. The Conservancy will work with others to protect regionally significant habitats, connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and agricultural lands, supporting projects that build upon and connect the existing network of protected lands. Acquisition of fee title and conservation or agricultural easements from willing sellers helps protect land from development. As stewardship of public lands is becoming increasingly challenging, many conservation partners are intensifying their efforts to work with private landowners, including farmers and ranchers, to achieve multiple conservation goals.

Regional Trails and Recreational Opportunities

As the region continues to grow in population, the acreage and accessibility of open space for urban populations needs to keep pace. Access to open space plays a significant role in the Bay Area's high quality of life and opportunities for outdoor recreation contribute to healthy populations. The Conservancy is working with others to complete four regional trails in the Bay Area: the Bay Area Ridge Trail, the San Francisco Bay Trail, the California Coastal Trail, and the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail. In addition, we work to connect regional trails to each other and to communities. Regional trails and the Bay Trail in particular, can provide alternative transportation options, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Conservancy also funds educational and interpretive centers, staging areas, piers, picnic areas, campgrounds, urban waterfronts, and other recreational amenities that are accessible to urban populations and connect people to nature.

Bay Habitats

Approximately 85% of the Bay's tidal wetlands have been lost since the Gold Rush. The San Francisco Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Report called for restoration of 60,000 acres of tidal wetlands around the Bay, to benefit endangered species, migratory birds, fish and aquatic species, water quality, and local flood protection. Currently, nearly 40,000 acres have been acquired and are either being restored or planned for restoration and the Conservancy is playing a lead role in this effort.

Urban Waterfronts

The Conservancy has long played a role in revitalizing urban waterfronts, assisting local communities in the planning and implementation of projects to create jobs and economic benefits through a combination of private enterprises and public facilities that attract visitors. This work continues to be necessary, but is now complicated by the fact that urban waterfronts are on the front lines as sea level rises. The Pacific Institute estimated that more than $60 billion worth of infrastructure is at risk in the Bay Area due to sea level rise by 2100. Adaptation strategies will be a significant component of our future urban waterfront work.

Creeks and Rivers

The creeks and rivers flowing into San Francisco Bay have been dramatically altered due to development, water diversions, and urban runoff. This has negatively impacted water quality and habitat for fish and other aquatic species. We have funded local watershed plans and creek and river restoration efforts. A particular focus is on removing barriers to fish migration and increasing riparian habitat, focusing on the eight "anchor watersheds" with the highest restoration potential for steelhead trout, as identified by the Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration: Alameda Creek, San Francisquito Creek, Coyote Creek, Guadalupe River, Suisun Creek, Napa River, Corte Madera Creek, and Sonoma Creek. Restoration work on other creeks and rivers remains valuable when it achieves a variety of objectives.

<u>San Francisco Bay Area - Major Efforts in the Next Five Years:</u>

- Support protection of lands identified as essential or critical to sustaining biological diversity (Conservation Lands Network) and lands identified as critical wildlife linkages between large areas of wildlife habitat (Critical Linkages);
- Support farmers and ranchers in their efforts to manage their lands for food production and other purposes, such as wildlife habitat, watersheds, and viewsheds, with a focus on southern Santa Clara County, Sonoma, Napa Valley, Solano, eastern Alameda County, and Brentwood *(Western Marin and coastside San Mateo are managed by the North Coast and Central Coast, respectively);*
- Make significant progress towards completion of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, San Francisco Bay Trail, and San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail;
- Support public access and recreation projects that connect urban populations, especially those underserved by parks and open space, to natural areas;

- Complete the Napa Marsh and Hamilton Airfield wetland restoration projects, as well as several other wetland restoration projects. Start construction of the Bel Marin Keys portion of the Hamilton wetland restoration project and identify a strategy for long-term management of Hamilton and Bel Marin Keys;
- Make significant progress on Dutch Slough restoration and play an active role in the protection and enhancement of the Delta, within Contra Costa and Solano Counties;
- Complete construction of Phase 1 and planning for Phase 2 of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project and start implementation of Phase 2 construction. Complete the Feasibility Study for the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Study for Ponds A9-18 and the community of Alviso;
- Support projects that protect lands that could allow for wetland migration as sea levels rise;
- Help communities with urban waterfronts develop adaptation strategies to address sea level rise;
- Transition the Invasive Spartina Project from active eradication by the Conservancy to monitoring and management by landowners and other partners;
- Complete the climate change update to the San Francisco Baylands Habitat Goals Report;
- Develop multi-objective, multi-habitat projects, such as Living Shorelines, that implement recommendations of the Subtidal Habitat Goals Report;
- Support efforts to restore the "anchor watersheds" in the Bay Area and reduce barriers to migration for steelhead trout;
- Develop and support integrated water management within watersheds and across the region;
- Support environmental education and interpretive programs for urban populations, including habitat restoration projects that involve students and community volunteers and/or provide for greening of urban communities;
- Support the work of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, whose goal is to develop revenue sources for restoration of bay habitats and associated public access and flood management.

Central Coast

The Conservancy's Central Coast Region extends from northern San Mateo County to southern Santa Barbara County and includes some of the most spectacular scenery on the California coast. Throughout much of this region, agriculture is a predominant land use as evidenced by the world class vegetable farms of San Mateo, Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, as well as the expansive ranch lands of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. Beautiful, pristine beaches are found along the entire stretch, many of them backed by rugged coastal mountains. As a transition zone from southern to northern California flora and fauna, the region is known for a high degree of biological diversity, and includes many threatened and endangered species, as well as plants and animals known only to this part of the state.

Due largely to its scenic beauty and accessibility, the Central Coast region attracts visitors from all over the world. Some of the more popular destinations are the urban waterfronts in cities such as Santa Cruz, Monterey, Carmel, Morro Bay, Pismo Beach and Santa Barbara that provide coastal access, recreation and fishing, excellent restaurants and other amenities. The region offers long stretches of accessible beach along the Monterey Bay and San Luis Bay shorelines, as well as secluded pocket beaches at the mouth of many coastal streams. Dunes and mountains provide a picturesque backdrop to these beaches. Other frequently visited destinations are the mountainous hiking trails of the San Mateo and Santa Cruz coasts and the spectacular Big Sur lands of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties.

Over 2.1 million California residents live in the five counties constituting this region, most of them in cities and towns on or near the coast. Development pressure remains an ongoing threat as more and more people are drawn to the many amenities and more relaxed life-style this region has to offer compared to the more heavily developed areas of the state. This threat presents a challenge to the Conservancy and other entities attempting to preserve the natural and scenic resources found so abundantly in the Central Coast region, necessitating a constant search for new and creative measures to accomplish our conservation goals.

Major Issues in the Central Coast

Coastal Access

Development of the Coastal Trail and public access to beaches and other protected lands remains an important goal in the Central Coast region. Demand for access continues to grow as the population of the region attracts more residents as well as visitors from other areas. There is an ongoing need to link existing trails and to open new access, as well as to construct support facilities such as restrooms and interpretive facilities. The Coastal Trail and regional trails that link communities to the coast benefit the region both by providing options for non-motorized transportation, while also expanding recreation opportunities and strengthening the tourist economy.

Agricultural and Working Lands

The Central Coast region is one of the state's most productive agricultural areas. In addition to their economic importance, agricultural lands, and in particular range lands, provide a number of other values such as groundwater recharge, wildlife linkages, flood water retention, open space and scenic views. Yet agricultural lands continue to be lost as the result of development or incompatible adjacent land uses. The Conservancy maintains an active agricultural preservation program and will continue to seek measures to protect working lands in the Central Coast. Acquisition of conservation easements and other conservation measures are critical to ensure continued protection of agricultural lands.

Coastal Habitat

The Central Coast supports a broad range of habitat types from wetlands, to coastal chaparral and grasslands to redwood forests. The dunes along San Luis Bay and Monterey Bay provide a glimpse of what much of the California coast looked like historically. As elsewhere in

the coast, streams and rivers and their surrounding watersheds are threatened with various types of development, as well as degraded conditions resulting from past destructive land uses or flood management actions. The Conservancy remains highly focused on preventing or repairing damage to these sensitive resources, adopting a holistic perspective that considers the needs of species, as well as overall hydrologic, geomorphic, economic and community functions. With sea level rise and other impacts of climate change, coastal habitats will experience significant stress and change. The habitat preservation and restoration efforts in the Central Coast will prioritize projects which will enhance the resiliency of the coastal environment and/or local communities.

Central Coast - Major Efforts in the Next Five Years:

- Complete the San Clemente Dam Removal Project;
- Continue to lead and expand the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program as a model of agency cooperation and efficient government;
- Continue construction of the California Coastal Trail in San Mateo County and develop a long-term regional management plan;
- Protect and promote sustainable forestry in the Santa Cruz Mountains;
- Continue to support the collaborative integration of agriculture, wetland restoration, education and public access in Watsonville Sloughs;
- Protect and restore coastal rivers and streams to improve water quality, retention of flood waters, and recovery of salmonid species;
- Assist local communities to assess risks from climate change and develop adaptation plans to address those risks;
- Promote economic development projects based on increased coastal access in the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes area;
- Initiate restoration of Upper Devereux Slough in Santa Barbara County;
- Protect working lands throughout the Central Coast;
- Secure non-traditional funding for projects that provide ecosystem services;
- Promote development of additional low-cost overnight accommodations, particularly in Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties;
- Develop the Coastal Trail in northern San Luis Obispo County;
- Investigate opportunities to implement projects that sequester carbon, allowing California's natural resources to benefit from California's carbon market.

South Coast

The South Coast region extends from Ventura County to the Mexican Border. It is known for its wide, sandy beaches, dramatic mountains, moderate climate and rich biodiversity. The region is defined by the coastal plains of several major rivers and is bounded by the steep transverse mountain ranges. Ventura County retains a large amount of coastal agriculture, in contrast to the rest of the region where the coastline is either heavily urbanized or preserved as open space by state or local park districts. Outdoor recreation is a huge attraction in the South Coast where the beaches are wide and sandy and the water relatively warmer than the rest of

the state. Surfing is extremely popular and surfers have become important advocates for clean water and coastal protection. The South Coast region is the most densely populated area in the state, and is rich with human resources in the form of universities, research organizations, nonprofit organizations, local governments (88 cities in Los Angeles County alone), port districts and state conservancies.

Industrial activities are a major land use along the South Coast. Oil extraction is an ongoing activity, both offshore and onshore, and electrical power plants and the state's largest ports are major features on the landscape. The large tidal wetland complexes that characterized much of the coastline in the 19th and early 20th century were sacrificed for the economic wealth that lay beneath them: oil, flat land easy to build upon, and river mouths conducive to harbor development. Southern California generates enormous wealth for the state's economy, and visitors come for the cultural attractions of Los Angeles and San Diego as well as for the respite and charm found in coastal communities like Ventura, Laguna Beach, La Jolla, and Imperial Beach.

With over 22 million people living in southern California (about 60% of the state's population) the demand for housing and urban services is the biggest stressor on the coastal environment. The challenge faced by the Conservancy in the South Coast region is to undo some of the damage to coastal habitats caused by previous land uses and change antiquated infrastructure to incorporate more environmentally sustainable designs.

Major Issues in the South Coast

Coastal Access

While much of the South Coast is open to the public and there are numerous state and local parks offering picnic and camping facilities, there are enclaves where public access is very limited. For example, parts of the Malibu coast have little or no public access and opening up public accessways in Malibu is a high priority of the Conservancy. Development of the California Coastal Trail through the region is also an important goal, as the trail can be used for alternative transportation as well as purely recreational purposes. In addition, the Conservancy will continue its work to complete river parkways, such as those along the Ventura, Santa Clara, Los Angeles, Santa Ana, and San Diego rivers. Filling gaps in these statewide and regional trail systems and making connections with other trails and public transportation will continue to be priorities for our work in the region. Finally, the Conservancy also funds educational and interpretive centers, staging areas, piers, picnic areas, campgrounds, and other recreational amenities that are accessible to urban populations and connect people to nature.

Coastal Habitat

Historically, the South Coast was characterized by large tidal wetland complexes, wide flood plains and rich riparian corridors along coastal rivers and streams. Unfortunately, much of this habitat has been destroyed for urban development and flood control. The Conservancy has therefore invested significant resources and staff time towards support of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, a broad-based partnership of 18 state and federal agencies working in concert with scientists, local governments, and others to improve

coordination, pool resources, and advance the recovery of wetlands in the region. The Conservancy has also helped provide technical assistance to help inform critical restoration design and management decisions, such as historic ecology studies and development of assessment and monitoring methods. Restoration and enhancement of wetlands and other regionally-important habitat, particularly through the lens of future climate change and sea level rise, will continue to be a focus of the Conservancy's work.

Urban Greening and Waterfronts

The extent of Southern California's dense urbanization provides unique challenges and opportunities. Finding new ways to provide infrastructure that serves the needs of urban residents while also sustaining and creating valuable wildlife habitat is critical to the Conservancy's work in the region. The Conservancy has partnered recently with the City of Los Angeles to develop a prototype for constructing residential streets using "green" infrastructure that infiltrates water into the groundwater system, thereby improving water quality in the Los Angeles River as well as on the coast. It is likely that the Conservancy's efforts to restore and sustain coastal habitat will require continued efforts to change the way urban infrastructure is engineered so that more efficient and sustainable methods can be implemented. Providing and increasing access to natural areas in urban settings is another critical component of the Conservancy's work, and it will continue to seek innovative ways to establish community green areas such as urban forests and open spaces. As concerns over climate change increase, the need for holistic approaches that can integrate a range of needs will be paramount, and will drive much of the Conservancy's efforts in the South Coast.

Finally, the Conservancy will continue to build on its work to revitalize urban waterfronts by developing projects that increase public access, enhance working waterfronts, facilitate public education, and promote sustainable economic opportunities.

<u>South Coast - Major Efforts in the Next Five Years;</u>

- Obtain agreement among stakeholders on the preferred sediment disposal option for the Matilija Dam removal project, and secure construction funding from Congress for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- Complete property acquisitions for the Santa Clara River Parkway, enabling public access and agricultural activities to coexist along the river;
- Remediate contaminants at Ormond Beach and commencement of restoration of the tidal wetland;
- Complete a comprehensive public access plan for coastal accessways in the City of Malibu and construction of the Malibu Road beach access stairway;
- Complete the environmental documentation and public review for the Ballona wetlands restoration, and commencement of first phase of the project;
- Construct multi-benefit parks such as Milton Street Park on Ballona Creek and Washington Elementary Natural Park on Compton Creek;
- Collaborate with the City and County of Los Angeles on green infrastructure projects to address water quality and supply issues;
- Complete final plans for the Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project;

- Complete the California Coastal Trail in San Diego County and closure of critical gaps in Los Angeles County;
- Resolve sediment management issues in the Tijuana River estuary;
- Assist local communities to assess risks from climate change and develop adaptation plans to address those risks;
- Implement tree planting and other multi-benefit projects which reduce the heat island effect in urban areas;
- Continue to staff the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, a broad-based partnership to improve coordination, pool resources, and advance the recovery of wetlands in the region;
- Construct new segments of the Santa Ana River Trail;
- Plan, design, and/or construct new segments of the San Diego River Parkway;
- Focus on urban waterfront revitalization within the region.

Insert as text boxes within the following section:

21st Century Communication

The internet, smart phones and other portable web-based technology have revolutionized the way that the public accesses information. These changes have created new opportunities to communicate about public access and environmental education. The Conservancy will continue to support traditional interpretive and educational programs, but during the next five years we will improve our use of internet-based communication. We expect to reach new constituents and to expand public access to the coast, participation in coastal stewardship, and support for coastal resource conservation.

In planning for the next five years, the Conservancy will continue to improve its website and to develop new websites for key project initiatives, such as the Coastal Trail, that take full advantage of mobile and web-based technology. These tools enable us to provide trail users with updated and tailored information to expand use of the Trail, to improve the user's experience and to partner with local communities and businesses. Mobile devices allow new approaches, more dynamic and interactive than traditional interpretive signs, to providing interpretive information to park visitors.

Not everyone uses the web, and there are many areas of the coast with limited coverage. So, the Conservancy will not replace traditional information and outreach efforts with these new approaches. However, where appropriate, we will focus on using new technology to improve our communication.

Improving Accessibility for All

The Conservancy will continue to strive to improve coastal access for all segments of the population. People with disabilities comprise a significant portion of the California population.

In providing grants for public access, the Conservancy is committed and will continue to encourage and select projects that specifically seek to improve the opportunity for persons with disabilities to access the coast and its resources. In addition, in connection with *any* grant made by the Conservancy that serves to plan or develop public access to or along the coast, the

Conservancy will continue to require that its grantees comply with the requirements of all applicable federal and state laws governing barrier-free access for people with disabilities.

From time-to-time, the Conservancy also directly manages, coordinates or implements programs that serve to provide or enhance public access. The Conservancy will continue to ensure that each such program is planned, designed, and implemented in such a way as to provide people with disabilities the opportunity to participate in the program in a meaningful way.

III. The Next Five Years (what we want to do)

Based on our analysis of the issues facing the coast and the Bay Area, this plan identifies specific goals and numeric objectives that the Coastal Conservancy will achieve over the next five years. The purpose of the goals and objectives is to help the Conservancy prioritize its work, allocating both staff resources and funding to projects that achieve these objectives. For each of the goals, we have identified numeric objectives under two funding scenarios. The first scenario assumes that there are no new bond funds available to the Conservancy over the next five years. The second funding scenario assumes that a new statewide bond measure passes sometime in or after 2014 and provides an additional $400 million for the Coastal Conservancy. For the purpose of this plan, we assume that the new bond funds are available for any program or region of the Conservancy, and the numeric objectives are based on statewide opportunities.[1]

The numeric objectives for each goal and each region were determined by the Conservancy's regional managers through consultation with project staff, key stakeholders and project partners in each County. The numbers were also based on grant applications already submitted to the Conservancy and the Conservancy's anticipated future commitments to ongoing, large-scale projects. Conservancy staff consulted statewide and regional plans, including: Completing the Coastal Trail, regional coastal trail plans, the San Francisco Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Report, the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Work Plan, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail Plan, Conservation Lands Network (the Upland Habitat Goals Report for the San Francisco Bay Area), the San Francisco Bay Subtidal Habitat Goals Report, plans and gap analyses for the San Francisco Bay Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail, Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plans for coastal watersheds; and County trail, transportation, and coastal plans. Additional factors that were considered include staffing levels and workload capacity, and available funding.

Public Access Goals

Public access is one of the major programs of the Conservancy. Public access projects expand opportunities for all Californians and all visitors to California to enjoy the coast. These

[1] Historically bond money for the Coastal Conservancy has come with geographic, and sometimes even project, restrictions. It is impossible to predict what a future bond would look like, so we have chosen to make simplifying assumption that it will be available for the full range of Conservancy programs over our entire jurisdiction.

projects include construction of new trails, trailheads and other features (bathrooms, overlooks, etc). Coastal access projects support the tourism economy, valued at $12 billion in 2000. The public access goals also include the Conservancy's work to revitalize working waterfronts. These projects include expanding public access but also may involve investments to maintain commercial fishing infrastructure or achieve other goals.

The Conservancy works closely with the Coastal Commission to promote public access to the coast. We will continue to improve and enhance this partnership during the next five years as a key strategy to ensure efficiency and coordination of effort. There are many opportunities for our agencies to improve collaboration on coastal access projects, including completion of the California Coastal Trail and development of new coastal accessways.

During the next five years, the Conservancy will focus on completing regional trails, such as the California Coastal Trail, which is both a recreational feature and in some areas a means of alternative transportation. The Conservancy will also continue to work to expand access to the coast by providing funding for projects that benefit disabled or disadvantaged communities. Where appropriate, the Conservancy will seek to expand its use of web-based communication to improve the ability of the public to access the coast. All access projects will need to be planned to consider climate change impacts, and we expect that a major focus of our waterfront revitalization work over the next five years will be to help communities plan for and adapt to climate change and sea level rise impacts.

Goal 1: Develop the California Coastal Trail as a major recreational amenity, tourist attraction, and alternative transportation system.

Objective 1A: Implement projects to promote awareness and use of the California Coastal Trail, including web-based technologies.
Objective 1B: Place California Coastal Trail signs on existing trails.
Objective 1C: Design new trail segments.
Objective 1D: Construct new trail segments.
Objective 1E: Assist with projects that secure real property or property interests to facilitate the development of the California Coastal Trail.
Objective 1F: Improve support facilities at existing coastal accessway; where feasible include features to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
1A: # Projects	4	10	1	5	1	4
1B: # miles of trail signed	30	60	30	60	40	80
1C: #miles	12	35	8	40	8	12

trail						
1D: #miles trail	12	30	15	30	2	20
1E: # Projects	3	8	2	5	1	4
1F: # Projects	3	10	4	15	2	20

* For purposes of this goal, the County of San Francisco is included in the Central Coast.

Goal 2: Expand the system of coastal public accessways, open-space areas, parks and inland trails that connect to the coast.

Objective 2A: Develop projects that expand opportunities for barrier-free access to and along the coast and coastal trails.
Objective 2B: Open coastal areas that are currently inaccessible or closed to public use.
Objective 2C: Design facilities to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities.
Objective 2D: Fund construction of new facilities, or reconstruction of dilapidated and unsafe facilities to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities.
Objective 2E: Design new regional trails and river parkways that connect inland populations to the coast.
Objective 2F: Construct new regional trails and river parkways that connect inland populations to the coast.
Objective 2G: Acquire land to allow for development of new coastal accessways.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
2A: # Projects	4	10	4	12	4	8
2B: # Projects	8	18	4	10	3	5
2C: # Designs	2	5	3	10	0	10
2D: # Facilities	4	8	5	15	1	3
2E: # Plans	1	3	1	3	1	4
2F: # Miles Trail	0	5	0	12	29	40
2G: # Projects	4	6	1	5	0	5

Goal 3: Revitalize coastal and inland waterfronts that provide significant public benefits and promote sustainable economic development.

Objective 3A: Develop waterfront revitalization plans that increase accessibility, create more inclusive access opportunities, support commercial and recreational fishing, encourage economic revitalization, promote excellence and innovation in

urban design, enhance cultural and historic resources, and that are resilient to a changing climate.

Objective 3B: Implement waterfront revitalization projects that increase accessibility, create more inclusive access opportunities, support commercial and recreational fishing, encourage economic revitalization, promote excellence and innovation in urban design, enhance cultural and historic resources and that are resilient in a changing climate.

Objective 3C: Design low cost visitor accommodations to expand access to the coast.

Objective 3D: Construct low cost visitor accommodations along the coast.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast		Bay Area	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
3A: # Plans	1	2	1	3	2	4	1	4
3B: # Projects	1	2	0	4	1	4	2	3
3C: # Plans	1	3	1	3	0	4	0	4
3D: # Projects	1	3	1	3	0	4	0	4

Coastal Resources Conservation Goals

Coastal resource conservation is the second major program area for the Conservancy. The overall goal is to support projects and activities that protect, enhance and educate the public about the coast's scenic, natural and agricultural resources. These goals include activities to improve wildlife habitat, preserve open space and protect working lands, including farmland, row crops and forests. These natural and scenic resources of the coast are vital to the state's economy and quality of life.

The coastal resource conservation program also includes the Conservancy's work to assist local communities to plan for and adapt to climate change. The Conservancy will work closely with the Commission and BCDC to support projects that improve understanding of local and regional climate change impacts. In concert with these partner agencies, the Conservancy will support local and regional adaptation planning to protect coastal resources in ways that contribute to the resiliency of the natural and built environments. Climate change will be a driving factor affecting all resource conservation activities in the future. Land acquisition and habitat enhancement must be planned in the context of a changing climate. Monitoring will be essential to provide indicators of stressors and to inform land managers of the need to alter management practices to increase resiliency.

Other challenges such as management costs for habitat enhancement and acquisition projects also informed our priorities in this program area. We expect that management funds will continue to be very limited and that management needs should be addressed upfront. Long-term, sustained conservation will continue to require partnerships with nongovernmental organizations to manage lands and reduce operational costs.

Goal 4: Protect significant coastal resource properties, including cropland, rangeland and forests.

Objective 4A: Protect significant coastal and watershed resource properties.
Objective 4B: Protect working-lands through conservation easements and other agreements.
Objective 4C: Implement projects that preserve and restore fish and wildlife corridors between core habitat areas along the coast and from coastal to inland habitat areas.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
4A: # Acres	21,000	35,000	2,000	6,000	580	1,000
4B: # Acres	7,000	10,000	6,000	10,000	0	40
4C: # Projects	5	15	1	5	0	6

Goal 5: Enhance biological diversity, improve water quality, habitat, and other natural resources within coastal watersheds.

Objective 5A: Develop plans for the restoration and enhancement of coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal terraces, coastal sage scrub, forests, and coastal prairie.
Objective 5B: Restore or enhance coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal sage scrub, coastal terraces, forests and coastal prairie.
Objective 5C: Develop plans to preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains.
Objective 5D: Implement projects that preserve, enhance, coastal watersheds and floodplains.
Objective 5E: Implement projects to improve fish habitat including projects to remove barriers to fish passage, ensure sufficient instream flow, and provide in stream habitat and favorable water temperatures.
Objective 5F: Complete plans to improve water quality to benefit coastal and ocean resources.
Objective 5G: Implement projects to improve water quality to benefit coastal and ocean resources.
Objective 5H: Implement projects to support the recovery of the southern sea otter.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
5A: # Plans	3	15	9	30	3	8
5B: # Acres	825	1,200	140	500	0	2,700

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
5C: # Plans	3	10	4	12	5	12
5D: # Projects	3	8	2	10	7	19
5E: # Projects	5	20	3	15	1	6
5F: # Plans	5	15	3	15	3	14
5G: # Projects	1	5	1	8	2	20
5H: # Projects	0	0	3	3	0	0

Goal 6: Enhance coastal working lands, including cropland, rangeland and forests.

Objective 6A: Develop plans for projects that foster the long-term viability of coastal working lands, including projects to assist farmers, ranchers, and timber producers to reduce impacts of their operations on wildlife habitat and water quality.

Objective 6B: Implement projects that foster the long-term viability of coastal working lands, including projects to assist farmers, ranchers, and timber producers to reduce impacts of their operations on wildlife habitat and water quality.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
6A: # Plans	4	10	3	10	1	4
6B: # Projects	4	10	1	8	0	4

Goal 7: Enhance the resiliency of coastal communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

Objective 7A: In cooperation with public agencies, universities and non-governmental organizations, identify significant climate-related threats, management challenges and priority technical assistance needed to maintain resilient coastal communities and natural resources.

Objective 7B: Conduct site-specific, regional and landscape-level vulnerability assessments from sea level rise and extreme storm events, and develop adaptation plans and strategies to address threats to coastal communities and public infrastructure in ways that protect natural resources and provide maximum public benefits.

Objective 7C: Conduct site-specific, regional and landscape-level vulnerability assessments of uplands and waterways, and develop adaptation plans to address predicted climate change impacts to natural resources, biodiversity, and critical habitat.

Objective 7D: Implement adaptation pilot projects that reduce hazards from sea level rise and extreme storm events, and which protect natural resources and maximize public benefits.

Objective 7E: Implement adaptation pilot projects that address climate change impacts to uplands natural resources, biodiversity and critical habitat.

Objective 7F: Implement projects that reduce greenhouse gases by increasing carbon sequestration, or by supporting land uses that reduce energy consumption including vehicle miles traveled.

Objective 7G: Implement tree and vegetation planting projects that reduce urban heat islands and provide other benefits such as reduced energy use, improved air quality, enhanced stormwater management, and improved quality of life.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast		Bay Area		State-wide
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	
7A: # Study									1
7B: # Plan	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	5	
7C: # Plans	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	2	
7D: # Projects	1	2	1	5	0	0	0	2	
7E: # Projects	1	2	0	1	0	8	0	2	
7F: # Projects	1	2	1	2	1	8	1	3	
7G: # Projects	0	0	0	1	1	4	0	2	

Goal 8: Provide non-regulatory alternatives to reduce conflicts among competing uses in the Coastal Zone.

Objective 8A: Implement projects that resolve land-use conflicts stemming from local coastal programs and work toward elimination of “white holes” (areas where there is no certified local coastal program).

Objective 8B: Implement multi-benefit projects that accomplish multiple objectives and resolve longstanding conflicts.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
8A: # Projects	0	0	0	0	1	1
8B: # Projects	0	1	0	1	6	12

Goal 9: Expand environmental education efforts to improve public understanding, use and stewardship of coastal resources.

Objective 9A: Support programs and events that improve public understanding of coastal resources.

Objective 9B: Support the design and installation of interpretive or educational displays and exhibits related to coastal, watershed, and ocean-resource education, maritime history, and climate-change.

Objective 9C: Construct or improve regional environmental education centers that educate the public about environmental issues affecting the coast and inland watersheds.

	North Coast		Central Coast		South Coast	
	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond	Existing Funds	New Bond
9A: # Programs	10	15	11	14	6	6
9B: # Exhibits	1	3	1	3	6	8
9C: # Centers	1	3	0	1	0	0

San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program Goals

The San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program was added to the Conservancy's enabling legislation in October 1997 to address resource and recreational goals within the entire nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. The San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program has four major goals: 1) improving public access; 2) conserving and enhancing habitat; 3) implementing the Coastal Act, San Francisco Bay Plan and other adopted plans; and 4) providing recreational and educational opportunities in open space and natural areas to urban populations. While there is substantial overlap in the goals and objectives between the coastal regions and the San Francisco Bay Area, the Bay Area Conservancy Program is treated as its own section within the strategic plan because of its unique legislative mandate and jurisdiction.

Goal 10: Identify and prioritize long-term resource and recreational goals for the San Francisco Bay Area.

Objective 10A: Identify and prioritize resource and recreational goals, including projects that protect and enhance natural habitats and other open-space lands of regional significance, such as agricultural lands, and those that improve public access to and around the bay, along the ridges and coast, and to open space and natural areas.

	San Francisco Bay	
	Existing Funds	New Bond
10A: # Plans	2	5

Goal 11: Protect and enhance natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources of regional importance in the Bay Area.

Objective 11A: Protect tidal wetlands, managed wetlands, seasonal wetlands, riparian habitat, and subtidal habitat.

Objective 11B: Protect wildlife habitat, connecting corridors, scenic areas, and other open-space resources of regional significance.

Objective 11C: Develop plans for enhancement of tidal wetlands, managed wetlands, seasonal wetlands, upland habitat, and subtidal habitat.

Objective 11D: Enhance tidal wetlands, managed wetlands, seasonal wetlands, upland habitat, and subtidal habitat.

Objective 11E: Develop plans for enhancement of riparian and riverine habitat or other watershed functions and processes for the benefit of wildlife or water quality, including removal of barriers to fish passage or projects that ensure sufficient instream flow.

Objective 11F: Enhance riparian and riverine habitat or other watershed functions and processes for the benefit of wildlife or water quality, including removal of barriers to fish passage or projects that ensure sufficient instream flow.

Objective 11G: Develop plans to eradicate non-native invasive species that threaten important habitats in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Objective 11H: Eradicate non-native invasive species that threaten important habitats in the San Francisco Bay Area.

	San Francisco Bay	
	Existing Funds	New Bond
11A: # Acres	500	3,000
11B: # Acres	2,000	20,000
11C: # Acres	3,000	10,000
11D: # Acres	1,500	9,000
11E: # Plans	2	6
11F: # Projects	2	6
11G: # Plans	0	3
11H: # Projects	1	3

Goal 12: Improve public access, recreation, and educational facilities and programs in and around San Francisco Bay, along the coast, the ridgelines, in urban open spaces, and natural areas.

Objective 12A: Develop plans for projects that provide recreational facilities such as picnic and staging areas, docks and piers, campgrounds, parking lots, interpretive signs, interpretive or educational centers, and natural play spaces.

Objective 12B: Implement projects that provide recreational facilities such as picnic and staging areas, docks and piers, campgrounds, parking lots, interpretive signs, interpretive or educational centers, and natural play spaces.

Objective 12C: Complete acquisition projects that increase the amount of land accessible to the public or provide corridors for trails.

Objective 12D: Develop plans for completing segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail.

Objective 12E: Construct segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail.

Objective 12F: Plan segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Objective 12G: Construct segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Objective 12H: Develop plans for regionally significant public access trails and community connectors, including links between the Bay Trail, Ridge Trail, Water Trail, and Coastal Trail, and links between regional trails and urban communities.

Objective 12I: Construct regionally significant public trails and community connectors, including links between the Bay Trail, Ridge Trail, Water Trail, and Coastal Trail, and links between regional trails and urban communities.

Objective 12J: Designate launch sites for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail.

Objective 12K: Enhance designated launch sites for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail.

Objective 12L: Implement projects that expand opportunities for barrier-free access to natural areas.

Objective 12M: Implement projects that create, expand, or improve environmental educational or interpretive programs, especially those that are available to urban populations.

	San Francisco Bay	
	Existing Funds	New Bond
12A: # Plans	4	10
12B: # Projects	3	15
12C: # Acres	1,000	10,000
12D: # Miles	22	25
12E: # Miles	5	14
12F: # Miles	15	50
12G: # Miles	9	30
12H: # Plans	2	6
12I: # Projects	2	5
12J: # Sites	15	21
12K: # Sites	6	10

12L: # Projects	3	12
12M: # Projects	10	20

Goal 13: Protect Bay Area working lands and support farmers and ranchers in implementing stewardship of the natural resources on their lands.

Objective 13A: Protect working lands, including farmland, rangeland and forests.
Objective 13B: Implement projects that assist farmers and ranchers to steward the natural resources on their lands.

	San Francisco Bay	
	Existing Funds	New Bond
13A: # Acres	1,000	7,500
13B: # Projects	1	5

Organizational/Operational Issue Goals

To implement this strategic plan, the Conservancy will have to develop new sources of funding for our projects and our operations. We will need to structure our programs and reorganize our staff resources to match these new funding sources. The Conservancy will continue to foster a culture of entrepreneurial collaboration, innovative partnering, skill assessment and enhancement for technical assistance, and grant writing to support the staff necessary to advance the agency's mission. Where appropriate, staff will also be encouraged to develop specific skills that can help us to implement new kinds of projects, such as work in the emerging carbon markets. This revised strategy will inevitably shift staff resources toward activities that will generate funding; sometimes altering what would otherwise be the highest priority staffing assignments.

At the direction of the Legislature, the Conservancy has developed a ten year funding plan for the agency's ongoing operation absent any new bond funds. This ten year plan is attached as Appendix D.

New Sources of Funding

Clearly one of the most pressing issues facing the Conservancy is the need to identify and raise new sources of money to pay for the agency's projects and its on-going operation. Some of the most promising of these ideas are summarized below:

- Forest Carbon Credits: The Conservancy could fund acquisition of timber land, consistent with our goals and priorities, but with the intent of generating carbon credits through sustainable forest management. Some portion of the proceeds from the carbon credits would be returned to the Conservancy to continue its work.

- Wetland carbon credits: Initial studies indicate that coastal wetlands are very effective at sequestering carbon. The Conservancy is working with partners to establish a wetland carbon protocol that would allow us to generate carbon credits through wetland restoration. Some portion of the proceeds from the carbon credits would be returned to the Conservancy.
- Other Carbon Revenues: The Conservancy could pursue projects that use revenues from California's carbon cap and trade program, including alternative transportation projects (such as trail sections of use to commuters), sustainable infrastructure projects, sustainable agriculture, land and natural resource conservation and management (such as soil carbon sequestration), and other projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon. Several steps would need to take place before these funds could be used. Some portion of the proceeds from the carbon revenue would be returned to the Conservancy.
- San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Local Tax Measure: The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority is a regional government agency created by state law. The Authority is charged with raising and distributing funds for the restoration of San Francisco Bay and its shoreline and is exploring local/regional revenue options. Many of the Conservancy's San Francisco Bay projects could be implemented using these funds.
- In-lieu Fee Programs: The Conservancy could create in-lieu fee programs under which it would collect and administer mitigation funds. This would allow the Conservancy to aggregate mitigation funds to implement regionally important projects rather than small acre-by-acre mitigation projects. The Conservancy is currently working with the partner agencies of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project to explore developing a regional in-lieu fee program.
- Mitigation Settlements: The Conservancy could enter into an agreement with a utility or other partner to act as the implementation entity for a mitigation program decreed as part of a settlement. For example, we could implement a natural resource restoration program in conjunction with a dam relicensing settlement.
- Ecosystem Services: Ecosystem services are the social and economic benefits derived from ecological resources and ecosystem processes. They include a range of services such as provision of clean drinking water, flood attenuation, and nutrient cycling. Many of these services align with the Conservancy's work and it is possible there could be opportunities to fund Conservancy projects if markets for these services are created.
- Environmental License Plate Funds (ELPF): All of the other state conservancies get a large part of their operating budget from ELPF. The Coastal Conservancy does not receive any ELPF for its operation and, while these funds are over-subscribed, we will continue to make the case for an allocation for the Conservancy.
- Grants for staff: The Conservancy has been very successful in applying for and being awarded grants for our projects. When we had sufficient operating funds, we preferred to direct the full amount of funding to project implementation and did not always cover

our staff costs. In the future, we will increase the amount of staff costs that we recover from all incoming grants, and to use our grant writing skills to apply for grants that would fund staff to implement projects themselves.

- Fee for Service - administrative services to other state conservancies: Several other state Conservancies have approached us about providing administrative services such as human resources, information technology and fiscal services. To the extent that we can achieve efficiencies providing these services to other agencies, these agreements could help support the Conservancy to allow us to achieve our mission.
- Fee for Service - planning services: Some partners have suggested that Conservancy staff could provide assistance in managing or facilitating regional planning efforts. Staff time would be compensated on a fee for service basis.

Reducing Costs

Over the past two years, we have reduced our operating budget by about 20%. This reduction was achieved through attrition associated with retirements, savings generated by furloughs, voluntary reductions in staff hours, greater efficiency in use of materials, and less travel. We expect to continue to reduce these costs and have created a staff committee to review our operational budget to identify new ideas for how to save money.

About three quarters of the operating budget for the Conservancy is the cost of our staff. If there is no new bond act, and if we are otherwise unable to raise sufficient revenue, we expect to reduce our staff as we complete our administration of existing bond programs. We will also reorganize our staff to meet the future needs of the agency and to complete the work associated with new funding sources.

Goal 14: Implement a sustainable funding strategy for the Conservancy projects and programs.

Objective 14A: Conduct annual evaluation of agency's budget against its longterm financial plan.

Objective 14B: Develop and evaluate progress towards achieving annual funding targets.

Goal 15: Reorganize the Conservancy's structure to align staff resources with the Conservancy's new sources of funding.

Objective 15A: Develop and continue to adapt the organizational structure to align staff resources with the longterm funding strategy.

Goal 16: Ensure full transparency and accountability, including external communications about the Conservancy's purposes, actions, and accomplishments.

Objective 16A: Maintain and consistently upgrade the Conservancy project database and complete required reporting to the Legislature, Resources Agency, and control agencies.

Objective 16B: Improve and expand our web presence to improve transparency and improve external communications about the Conservancy's work.

Objective 16C: Develop better mapping tools and use them for project planning, decision making, and reporting.

Objective 16D: Prepare and disseminate compelling regional and topical summary reports of our accomplishments.